

ART IN THE PARK GUIDE

SKETCHING ARCHITECTURE



Grab your sketchbook and drawing supplies or whatever materials you have at home and get outside! Look closely at the historical buildings in and around East Jersey Old Town Village or in your own neighborhood then try recording your observations onto paper!

Seeing Like an Artist

Artists have keen observational skills and are great at noticing large shapes that make up structures as well as decorative details. Most buildings fall into general stylistic categories that are indicative of the time they were built. Sometimes walls really do talk. You can learn a lot about history through these buildings if you know what to look for!

Consider the following:

- **Form** - What are the general shapes of the structures you are sketching and can they be broken down into multiple smaller shapes to make sketching simpler?
- **Perspective** - If you are sketching a group of buildings or a building situated in a landscape scene, consider the foreground (what is closest to you), middleground, and background. Objects that are closest to you will appear bigger and those farther away will appear smaller. Check out Youtube for lots of one-point and two-point perspective drawing tutorials. You can also indicate perspective by drawing objects closest to you with a heavier or darker line. If you are using color, objects and scenery often appear more blue as they recede into the distance.
- **Detail** - Architects incorporated lots of details into early architecture. Some of these elements are practical and dictated by use and materials while others are decorative and may indicate status. Though some details can help you identify the time period in which a building was built, they can also be deceiving. Builders often incorporated elements from earlier time periods into buildings. Greek, Roman, and gothic design elements are still used today in modern architectural design.
- **Looking to learn** - Let your observations inspire you to learn more about the buildings and history throughout Middlesex County. Buildings like those found at East Jersey Old Town Village, tell stories that connect us with our present, future, and our national history. Check out the link below to explore!
[Middlesex County History Tour](#)